



PROGRAM POLICY STATEMENT
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) IN HEALTH BEHAVIOR SCIENCE AND PROMOTION
DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Contents

- I. Program Overview**
 - a. Mission Statement
 - b. Current Status
 - c. Degree Offered
- II. Admission**
 - a. Admission Criteria and Requirements
 - b. Prior Degree Requirements
 - c. Application Deadlines
 - d. Admission Categories
 - e. Other Documents Required
 - f. BHAN Statement of Diversity and Inclusion
 - g. University Statement
- III. Academic Degree: Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Health Behavior Science and Promotion**
 - a. Degree Requirements and Program Learning Outcomes
 - b. Faculty Advisors and PhD Dissertation Committees
 - c. Timetable and Satisfactory Progress toward Degree
- IV. Assessment Plan**
- V. Financial Aid**
- VI. Program Administration and Organization**
 - a. Program Faculty
 - b. HBS Graduate Programs Director
 - c. HBS Graduate Program Committee
 - d. Program Resources

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I: PROGRAM OVERVIEW

A. Mission Statement.

The Health Behavior Science and Promotion (HBSP) Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) provides the highest degree for health promotion and behavioral science professionals, preparing graduates for research careers in many settings, including academia, non-governmental organizations (business and non-profit), allied health fields, and public service at all levels of national government. The curriculum will provide graduate students with the training needed to become effective scientific practitioners with the capacity to conduct independent research in health-related outcomes and promotion, in academic and applied settings. Completion of a high-quality PhD dissertation, **based on original research**, is a key feature of the academic program. Students' capacity to complete dissertation research is developed through a rigorous curriculum designed to bring students to the intellectual forefront of their discipline. The research emphasis of the Health Behavior Science and Promotion field is on the individual (including cognitive and affective domains), social, behavioral and environmental determinants of health and health behavior change across levels of the social ecological model, and the development of high quality, evidence-based health promotion interventions.

B. Current Status.

The HBSP PhD Program was approved by faculty senate in February 2018. The first student was enrolled in fall 2018. The program will be reviewed for permanent status in fall 2023.

C. Degree Offered.

The degree awarded to those who complete this program is a PhD in HBSP.

II: ADMISSION

A. Admission Criteria and Requirements

A1. Criteria

Applicants from diverse educational and professional backgrounds in health behavior science and promotion or a related science/health field, who have a strong interest in health behavior science and Promotion, are encouraged to apply. Each application will be evaluated individually on the basis of these key areas:

- 1) Academic record/achievement;
- 2) Work, research, and/or community health experience;
- 3) Matching interest with, and availability of, current HBS faculty to serve as the students' faculty advisor; and,
- 4) Commitment to, and, interest in the individual, social, behavioral and environmental determinants of health, health behavior change across levels of the social ecological model, and the development of high quality evidence based health promotion programs.

A2. Requirements

Applicants must submit all materials directly to the University of Delaware Graduate College using the online admission process to be considered for admission.

Admission decisions will be made by the Health Behavior Science Graduate Programs Committee. Students will be admitted to the program based on enrollment availability, the availability of faculty mentorship, and their ability to meet the following **minimum** recommended entrance requirements:

1. A master's Degree in a related field from an accredited college or university with a GPA \geq 3.3 for the HBSP PhD program **or** a bachelor's degree in a related field from an accredited college or university with an undergraduate GPA \geq 3.3 for the Master of Science (MS to PhD bypass option).

2. GRE scores within the past 5 years.
3. TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score of at least 600 (paper based), or TOEFL IBT minimum score of 100.

B. Prior Degree Requirements.

A completed master's degree in health promotion, public health or the related social and behavioral sciences is required for admittance to the HBSP PhD Program.

Students enrolled in the MS in Health Promotion (currently offered within the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition [BHAN] at the University of Delaware) may apply to the HBSP PhD program in the winter of their first year of study and with agreement in writing from their MS advisor. If admitted, they may begin their HBSP PhD program in their second year within the Department (note that this second year in the Department will be their first year as at PhD student). Students applying to the MS to PhD bypass option must: (1) have exceptional performance during the first year of the Master's program, (2) have the approval of the HBS graduate programs committee and their advisor, and, (3) have completed a bachelor's degree in health promotion, public health or the related social and behavioral sciences from an accredited university.

C. Application Deadlines.

Applications (all materials) for the HBSP PhD Program will be reviewed on a rolling basis between January 15 and March 15 for admission to the program at the beginning of the following fall semester. Since application decisions will be made on a rolling basis within this timeframe (January 15th – March 15th), applicants are strongly advised to complete and submit applications as early as possible.

The admission process at the Department level will be completed as follows: completed applications will be reviewed by the PhD director, and, applicants who meet the admission criteria will then have their application file circulated to the HBS graduate programs committee as well as faculty who have been identified by candidates as having shared research interests. Faculty members will provide feedback on each applicant to the HBS graduate programs committee. Faculty identified by applicants as having shared research interests will also comment on his/her willingness and ability (in terms of time and funding) to serve as the applicant's advisor. A faculty member can advise no more than two HBSP PhD students simultaneously (regardless of where the students are in their course of study). The goal is for faculty to advise/mentor students whose background, goals and objectives are compatible with their own research and funding. Only qualified applicants who have a potential faculty advisor will be invited to complete an interview. To be admitted to the HBSP PhD program, a student must have a faculty advisor. The HBS graduate programs committee in conjunction with potential advisors will make final decisions on admission. Admitted students will begin the program in the fall semester. Admission to the program is limited and not all qualified applicants will be admitted.

D. Admission Categories.

Students may be admitted into the HBSP PhD program in one of **four** categories:

- 1) Admitted **full-time** with full assistantship that provides tuition and a stipend support
- 2) Admitted **full-time** with partial assistantship that provides tuition support
- 3) Admitted **full-time** with no assistantship support
- 4) **Admitted part time with no assistantship support**

Graduate Assistantship support will be provided only to full-time students on a year-to-year basis. See Section V: Financial Aid for additional information about funding.

E. Application Documents Required.

PhD applicants are expected to submit:

1. A graduate application essay
2. Current curriculum vitae
3. A minimum of three letters of recommendation, it is recommended that at least two be from

academic references.

4. Official transcripts and GRE scores
5. TOEFL scores (for international applicants only)

MS to PhD bypass applicants are expected to submit:

- 1) A letter of recommendation from their MS advisor to the PhD Program Director indicating their recommendation for acceptance into the PhD program
- 2) A letter of recommendation from the identified PhD advisor to the PhD Program Director indicating their agreement to work with the student; Note: If the student's MS advisor is going to be their PhD advisor, then just one letter of recommendation is needed
- 3) GRE Scores
- 4) An updated graduate application essay
- 5) Current curriculum vitae
- 6) Unofficial copy of graduate transcripts

All documents to apply for the MS to PhD bypass should be combined into a single PDF document and submitted to the PhD Program Director before the March 15 deadline.

F. BHAN Statement of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

The Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition (BHAN) is committed to sharing values of diversity, equity and inclusion. We believe that we can best promote and endorse these values by recruiting and retaining a diverse group of students, faculty and staff and by creating a climate of respect that is supportive of their academic success. This climate for diversity, equity, and inclusion is central to achieving our academic potential through research and scholarship, teaching, and service.

The Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition gives definition to this climate of a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community as it relates to:

1. **Access to our Departments Programs and Practices:** We implement academic programs and scholarly practices that seek to provide equitable access and enable all students to grow academically. Specific strategies that we keenly use include:
 - Active participation in the annual, 6-day College of Health Sciences Summer Camp that provides a deep exploration into health sciences majors and careers for traditionally underrepresented students (i.e., minority, low-income, or (soon to be) first generation students).
 - The provision of a dynamic and up-to-date BHAN website that utilizes culturally diverse images and engages current and potential students, as well as their families, in learning about our on-going programs.
 - Engaged with the Ronald E. McNair Post Baccalaureate Achievement Program (the McNair's Scholars Program). The McNair Scholars program is renowned for preparing traditionally underrepresented groups for graduate education.
 - Recruitment of students from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and organizations. Specifically, we engage with central organizations such as The Delaware Valley Consortium for Excellence & Equity (formerly the Delaware Valley Minority Student Achievement Consortium or DVMSAC), and The New Jersey Network to Close the Achievement Gaps to directly market our academic programs to traditionally underserved groups.
2. **Teaching and Learning:** We are rigorous and empathetic teachers who collectively seek to examine and revise our curriculum and teaching practices as necessary to ensure that we are

effective in helping all students achieve their academic potential. Specific strategies that we use to promote inclusive teaching and learning include:

- Prior to the start of each academic year, graduate students and faculty can participate in an intensive in-service training related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This interactive training focuses on individual cultural competence and specifically works to build participant’s cultural awareness, knowledge and skills. At the conclusion of the training, attendees are encouraged to develop a cultural competence plan for an aspect of their work in the coming academic year.
- Faculty are trained and actively encouraged to connect students (both direct advisees and any student who solicits help) with professional groups and organizations that promote diversity and assist in establishing networks as per the Office of Equity and Inclusion at the University of Delaware.
- All PhD students in the program will be provided with a tailored advising and mentoring plan that will be designed to maximize academic success. The University of Delaware’s Diversity and Inclusion resources will be consulted in the development of this plan.

G. University Statement.

Admission to the graduate program is competitive. Those who meet stated requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet all of those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths as determined by the HBS Graduate Programs Committee.

Table 1: Outline of HBSP PhD Program Coursework

	# Credits
HLPR803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming	3 credits
HLPR804 Advanced Health Promotion Program Evaluation	3 credits
HLPR 809 Health Behavior Theory or HLPR630 Behavior Change Strategies and Tactics	3 credits
HLPR813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine	3 credits
BHAN820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health	3 credits
BHAN855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Health Sciences	3 credits
BHAN856 Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health	3 credits
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Electives (List of possible statistics electives provided in Appendix; electives are approved by advisor)	9 credits
ELECTIVE COURSE (1 course, 3 credits)	3 credits
<i>List of possible electives provided in appendix A; elective is chosen and approved by advisor</i>	
BHAN Seminar	0 credits
Preliminary Examinations	0 credits
HLPR868 Independent Research	6 credits
HLPR969 Dissertation Research	9 credits
TOTAL CREDITS	48 Credits

III: ACADEMIC DEGREE: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) IN HEALTH BEHAVIOR SCIENCE AND PROMOTION (HBSP)

The HBSP PhD Program provides the highest degree for health behavior science and promotion professionals, preparing graduates to become effective scientific practitioners who conduct

independent research. Completion of a high-quality PhD dissertation includes the degree requirements outlined below as a key feature of the academic program. In addition, students are expected to actively engage in other research and scholarly pursuits including the design, execution and dissemination of research activities (e.g., data collection, data analysis, presentations, manuscripts, grant writing).

A. Degree Requirements and Program Learning Outcomes.

The HBSP PhD program requires successful completion of a minimum of 48 credit hours, completion of a comprehensive examination, a dissertation which includes oral and written components, and a publishable paper. The HBSP PhD is designed to be completed over a 4-year period for full-time students and no more than 7 years (14 consecutive semesters) for part-time students.

In addition to the minimum of 48 credit hours, degree requirements for the HBSP PhD include:

1. Comprehensive exam (section A.5)
2. Oral dissertation proposal defense and oral dissertation defense (section A.6)
3. Written dissertation (section A.7, Table 3)
4. Other (Publishable Paper Requirement, section A.8)

Coursework and Credit Hours

An outline of the 48 required credit hours is provided in Table 1 (page 5).

Students who have had substantially similar courses to one or more of those required prior to entering the HBSP PhD may substitute other appropriate courses with the approval of the advisor, and the HBS graduate programs committee, and the completion/approval of the course substitution form required by the Graduate College. A maximum of 9 credits may be substituted in the program of study. Only those courses in the 600, 800 and 900 levels can apply towards the HBSP PhD. Independent study courses will be accepted based on approval of the student's advisor and the HBS graduate programs committee. A maximum of 3 independent research study credits may be included in the program of study.

Program Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the distribution of key health conditions and behaviors and how they may vary based on demographic and geographic factors
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the complex interplay between multi-level determinants of health and disease
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the theories of health behavior change and their application
- Students will be proficient in the design, implementation, interpretation and dissemination of pragmatic and rigorous program evaluation strategies
- Students will demonstrate written proficiency of the literature in a health behavior science and promotion-related content area.
- Students will demonstrate oral proficiency of the literature in a health behavior science and promotion-related content area.
- The student will demonstrate the ability to: (1) generate and code summary variables; (2) code and run appropriate descriptive, bivariate, and multivariable models; (3) interpret output for descriptive, bivariate, and multivariable models
- Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and answer a novel research question.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to disseminate written scientific literature
- Students will demonstrate the ability to verbally present scientific results in a scholarly setting

A2. Planned Program of Study

Students are required to develop a plan for a program of study with their advisor during the first semester of study. Students admitted part-time will develop an individual program of study with their advisor that will outline the timeline for completion of degree requirements. It is expected that the part-time students will take longer to complete the program requirements than full-time students. Depending on the student's background and interests, the program of study may include courses beyond the minimum

number required for the degree. The planned program of study must first be approved by the student's advisor. A typical plan for the program of study (**showing only the minimum requirements for the degree**) is shown in Table 2a. A typical plan for the program of study for students wishing to complete the MS/HBSP PhD bypass option is shown in **Table 2b**, page 10. Please see **Section III item F.2** for information about development of student advising and mentoring plans.

Table 2a: Sample Plan for HBSP PhD Program of Study (for those with MS degree **and enrolled full-time**)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • PhD Journal Club • HLPR803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming (3) • BHAN855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research in Health Sciences (3) • Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3) • HLPR868 Independent Research (1) <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • PhD Journal Club • HLPR 630 Behavioral Change Strategies (3) • Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3) • Elective (3) • HLPR 868 Independent Research (1) <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • PhD Journal Club • HLPR969 Dissertation Research (9) <p>[9 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • PhD Journal Club <p>*Sustaining</p>
Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club • Comprehensive Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club • HLPR804 Advanced Health Promotion Program Evaluation (3) • BHAN820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health (3) • BHAN856 Multivariate Biostatistics for Population Health (3) • HLPR868 Independent Research (1) <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club • HLPR868 Independent Research (3) • BHAN813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine (3) • Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3) <p>[9 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club *Sustaining 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club *Sustaining • Final doctoral dissertation defense.
Summer	<p><i>Research (0)</i></p>	<p><i>Research (0)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary Exams and Doctoral proposal defense (<i>have to be completed by August 1</i>) 	<p><i>Research (0)</i></p>	

*Dissertation proposal defense to occur by the end of the 4th semester of full-time study but no later than prior to the start of the second summer session during Year 2. **Note that *sustaining* in this context means that the student is still classified as a full-time student.

Table 2b: Sample Plan for HBSP PhD Bypass Option **(for those enrolled full-time)**

MS Year 1	
Fall	BHAN609 Research Design (3) HLPR809 Health Behavior Theory (3) HLPR819 Social Marketing (3) or HLPR610 Health and Media
Winter	<i>Apply to MS/PhD program bypass option)</i>
Spring	HLPR 632 Health Science Data Analysis or HLPR 605 Chronic Disease Management (3) Elective (3)



	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • PhD Journal Club • HLPR803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming (3) • BHAN855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods Research in Health Sciences (3) • Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3) • HLPR868 Independent Research (1) <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • PhD Journal Club • HLPR 630 Behavioral Change Strategies (3) • Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3) • Elective (3) • HLPR 868 Independent Research (1) <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) • HLPR969 Dissertation Research (9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHAN Seminar (0) <p>*Sustaining</p>
Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club • Comprehensive Exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club • HLPR804 Advanced Health Promotion Program Evaluation (3) • BHAN820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health (3) • BHAN856 Multivariate Biostatistics for Population Health (3) • HLPR868 Independent Research (1) <p>[10 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club • HLPR868 Independent Research (3) • BHAN813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine (3) • Statistics/Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective (3) <p>[9 credits]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club <p>*Sustaining</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD Journal Club <p>*Sustaining</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final doctoral dissertation defense.
Summer	<i>Research (0)</i>	<i>Research (0)</i>	<i>Research (0)</i>	

*Dissertation proposal defense to occur by the end of the 4th semester of study but no later than prior to the start of the second summer session during Year 2. **Note that *sustaining* in this context means that the student is still classified as a full-time student.

A3. Residency Requirement

While students who receive graduate assistantships need 8 academic semesters to complete the HBSP PhD degree, self-funded students with exceptional progress towards degree may complete the requirements in a minimum of 6 academic semesters. At least one continuous academic year must be devoted exclusively to full-time study (6 credit hours per semester for a student receiving an assistantship, 9 credit hours per semester for a student not on assistantship) in Health Behavior Science and Promotion in residence at the University of Delaware. **To fulfill the residency requirement, part time students need to be enrolled in credit hours for a continuous academic year and engaged in program-related activities as defined by their individual plan of study.** This residency requirement may be fulfilled using a fall and spring semester combination or a spring and fall semester combination, but summer and winter sessions do not count toward the residency requirement.

A4. Progress Requirements

Students must convene their dissertation committee at the latest during the second semester of study and each semester thereafter arrange a meeting to formally share progress towards their degree. Following each dissertation committee meeting, the student must complete a meeting report that is signed and approved by the advisor and reviewed by the HBS Graduate Programs Committee. Upon approval the student will share the report with the dissertation committee. Students who do not have committee meetings in a timely manner will be considered as failing to progress and will be required to meet with the HBS Graduate Programs Committee to determine whether a recommendation for dismissal from the program is warranted.

A5. Comprehensive Examination Requirement

Students must pass a comprehensive examination that tests their general knowledge base in health behavior science and promotion and their ability to critically evaluate scientific literature. Specific details are as follows:

1. The HBS graduate programs committee will have responsibility for the written examination, including writing and grading examination questions.
2. Content of the written exam will be based on health behavior science and promotion coursework taken in the first 30 credits of the academic program.
3. The comprehensive exam must be taken after completion of approximately 30 credits which for a full-time student typically occurs during Winter Session in the second academic year of study. **The comprehensive exam for part time students will be scheduled and included in their individual plan of study.**
4. The written examinations are graded on a pass/fail basis, with a letter grade of C or greater indicating "pass". Students who fail the comprehensive examination will be provided with a marked copy of their exam and have a feedback session with their advisor where areas to improve will be discussed. Students have one opportunity to retake and pass the examination sections that were failed. The retake must be taken within two months of the initial examination. A failure on the re-take would result in dismissal from the PhD program and the award of the Master's (MS) in Health Promotion degree pending the completion of any outstanding program requirements.
5. Students must pass the comprehensive examination requirement before proceeding to the dissertation proposal defense.

A6. Dissertation

A student's dissertation is a substantial original study in the area of health behavior science and promotion that requires approval at the dissertation proposal stage by the dissertation committee. Independent study time and all research activity prior to the dissertation proposal are intended to be productive and lay the groundwork for the dissertation. All work included in a student's dissertation must be formally approved by all members of the student's dissertation committee, at dissertation committee meetings and at the oral dissertation proposal defense. The dissertation includes both oral and written components.

A6a. Oral Dissertation Proposal Defense and Oral Dissertation Defense Requirements

Full time students in the HBSP PhD Program must complete an oral dissertation proposal defense prior to the start of their fourth semester of enrollment but no later than prior to the start of the second summer session during Year 2. **The deadline for completion of an oral dissertation proposal defense by a part-time student will be identified in the written individual program of study.** Prior to the oral presentation, the student should have prepared their full Institutional Review Board (IRB)/Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC) package [e.g., protocol, consent, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (also known as HIPAA)], if applicable. Following the successful oral defense of the dissertation proposal, the student should submit their IRB/IACUC materials as soon as possible.

Procedures for the oral dissertation proposal defense and the oral dissertation defense are the same. The written dissertation proposal and the final written dissertation will be made available to the student's PhD dissertation committee members at least two weeks prior to the oral defense dates. The oral defense meetings will include both a defense of the student's proposed or completed dissertation research and an in-depth examination of the student's knowledge of their research specialization. Students are expected to demonstrate competency in both oral and written communication skills. All BHAN faculty and students will be invited to attend the oral dissertation proposal defense meeting and oral dissertation defense meeting.

Immediately following the oral presentation of the defense, the PhD dissertation committee will meet separately to pose questions to the student. Once all questions have been answered the student will leave the room and the PhD dissertation committee will vote on the outcome of the defense. The possible outcomes of the oral defense are:

1. Pass. The student may proceed to the next stage of his/her degree training.
2. Conditional pass. In the event that the dissertation committee feels the student's proposal/dissertation materials were generally acceptable but with a specific deficiency, condition(s) will be specified that the student must revise to achieve a Pass and remain in the HBSP PhD program.
3. Re-examination: This result is appropriate for a student whose performance was unsatisfactory, but displayed evidence of the potential to complete graduate degree training. Re-examination must be completed by the end of the next semester. The possible outcomes of the re-examination are pass or failure. The student may not take the exam a third time.
4. Failure. This outcome would indicate that the student's PhD dissertation committee considers the student incapable of completing degree training and the student would be recommended for dismissal from the program and may be awarded the Master's (MS) in Health Promotion degree pending the completion of any outstanding coursework.

The outcome will be presented to the student. If 'conditional pass' or 're-examination' all conditions or requirements for proposal or dissertation revisions will be documented in a written format that is signed by the student, the Faculty Advisor (Dissertation Chairperson) and all members of the Dissertation Committee. For 're-examination' why the student failed and what a 're-examination' means needs to be detailed in the written documentation. For conditional pass, specific deficiencies or conditions must be addressed within two months of the original oral defense date. For re-examination, the revised written dissertation and revised oral defense must be completed by the end of the next semester. The possible outcomes of the re-examination are pass or failure. The student may not take the exam a third time.

Once the proposal defense has been successfully completed, the student must apply to the Graduate College for admission into candidacy. For students with the outcome 're-examination' students must register for pre-candidacy credits that can be transferred to candidacy credits upon receiving a 'pass' or 'conditional pass'. Once the final dissertation defense has been successfully completed, the student should notify the PhD Program Director who will provide additional directions.

A.6b. Written Dissertation Format

The Department supports both a traditional and article style (“Three Papers”) written dissertation format. While the scope and expectations for the HBSP PhD dissertation is provided elsewhere, Table 3 depicts the general content for both formats.

Table 3: Written Dissertation Requirements Based on Format *

	Traditional Dissertation	Three Papers Dissertation (papers do not have to be published to meet requirement)
Chapter Requirements	Minimum of 5 chapters, may be more. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1: Introduction and specific aims • Chapter 2: Substantive review of the literature/conceptual framework • Chapter 3: Methods • Chapter 4: Result • Chapter 5: Discussion, conclusion 	Minimum of 6 chapters, may be more. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 1: Introduction and specific aims. • Chapter 2: Conceptual framework, and methodology for each study aim • Chapter 3: Manuscript 1 • Chapter 4: Manuscript 2 • Chapter 5: Manuscript 3 • Chapter 6: Summary of key findings, future research directions
Manuscript Types	N/A	Minimum of 3 manuscripts. Up to 1 of the 3 manuscripts may be any type of review or meta-analysis manuscript.
Manuscript Status	N/A	One manuscript must be published or submitted for publication; and two other manuscripts suitable for publication at the dissertation defense.
Authorship	PhD candidate is sole author of the dissertation	Students are to be the first author on each manuscript. Co-first authorship is acceptable if the student is one of the first and submitting author and the student’s Dissertation Committee has provided approval; documentation of Dissertation Committee approval should be documented in the minutes from the meeting in which the co-first authorship was approved.
References	Comprehensive reference list at the end of the dissertation	References are included within the manuscripts of Chapters 3-5 and if needed, an additional reference list covering Chapters 1,2 & 6 at the end of the dissertation

*Adapted from Indiana University Richard M Fairbanks School of Public Health

For the Three Papers Dissertation format, if a paper has been accepted for publication, the published

manuscript in a word (not PDF) version should be included as the chapter. Permissions that include the “rights link” from the journal that it is okay to copyright these articles should be disclosed in an associated appendix. It is the responsibility of the student and his/her advisor to ensure compliance with permissions requirements.

A.7. Other (Publishable Paper Requirement)

The HBSP PhD Program requires all students to be the first author or a co-author on at least one manuscript that is published or submitted for publication prior to final oral dissertation defense.

B. Faculty Advisors and PhD Dissertation Committees

B1. Faculty Advisors.

During the application process, each student will nominate two HBS faculty members with which they share research interests. At least one faculty member must be willing and have the time to serve as advisor and to accept responsibility for oversight of the student’s academic progress in the program. Final faculty advisor selection will be made by the HBS Graduate programs committee and will be based on converging research interests and faculty availability. PhD student faculty advisors can typically advise no more than two HBSP PhD students simultaneously (regardless of where the students are in their respective HBS PhD Programs).

If, during the course of a student's academic program, the faculty advisor is unable or unwilling to continue as advisor, the student will work with the HBS graduate programs committee to identify another faculty member willing to be the new advisor. The new advisor must be identified within two months in order for the student to be considered making satisfactory progress toward the degree. Switching advisors does not change the deadlines for completing the degree requirements.

B2. PhD Dissertation Committee

The student is expected to work with their faculty advisor to assemble a dissertation committee by the second semester of the program. **Part-time students will identify when they are to assemble their dissertation committee in their written individual program of study.** The dissertation committee will consist of:

1. not less than four and not more than six members and shall be chaired by the faculty advisor. These four members must hold a terminal doctoral degree.
2. at least two of the four members must represent currently employed HBSP PhD Program faculty, one of whom shall be the faculty advisor/committee chairperson; and
3. at least one of the four members must be an external examiner chosen from a different academic program or from outside the University; and
4. the Committee can have up to two additional members (outside the four who hold a terminal doctoral degree) must be experts in the field of dissertation study.

The faculty advisor/committee chairperson shall have established a record of publication in the field of the dissertation and shall be a member of the faculty of the HBS Program in the Department. Faculty who have retired or resigned from the University may chair committees of students whose work began under their direction prior to their retirement or departure from the University. A faculty advisor/committee chairperson who is not employed by the University of Delaware may serve as co-chair of the committee providing that the other co-chair meets the conditions stated above.

C. Timetable and Definition of Satisfactory progress towards the degree.

C1. Time Limit for Completing the Degree.

The time limit for completion of the HBSP PhD degree requirements begins with the date of matriculation and is specifically detailed in the student’s letter of admission. Students entering the HBSP PhD program with a master’s degree who receive graduate assistantships will need 8 academic semesters to complete the HBSP PhD degree; self-funded students with exceptional progress towards degree may complete the requirements in a minimum of 6 academic semesters. A maximum length of up to 10

semesters is allowed to complete the requirements. Students who change their degree plan and have transferred from one degree program to another degree program are given 10 consecutive semesters from the beginning of the first year in the HBSP PhD program. Students in the MS to PhD bypass option are given up to 14 consecutive semesters to complete the degree requirements. **This time limit for completion of the HBSP PhD Program applies to students admitted as part-time; however, the time limit can be adjusted if appropriate progress is being made based on the individual plan of study.**

An extension of time limit may be granted for extenuating circumstances. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing and approved by the HBSP PhD Program Director, the student’s Dissertation Committee and the BHAN Department Chair. The HBS PhD Program Director will forward the request to the Graduate College.

C2. Submission of Required University Forms.

When a student has met the requirements for admission to candidacy as previously explained (section IV, A5), the HBSP PhD Program Director will submit a Recommendation for Candidacy to the HBSP PhD Degree [form](#) to the Graduate College. The student’s classification will change to post-candidacy upon admission to candidacy status. The deadline for admission to candidacy for the fall semester is August 31. The deadline for admission to candidacy for the spring semester is January 31. The deadline for admission to candidacy for the summer is April 30. The student is responsible for ensuring that admission to candidacy is secured at the proper time.

To initiate the process for degree conferral, candidates must submit an “Application for Advanced Degree” to the Graduate College. The application deadlines are February 15 for Spring candidates, January 15 for Winter candidates, May 15 for Summer candidates, and September 15 for Fall candidates. The application must be signed by the candidate’s advisor, the HBSP PhD Program Director and Department Chair; therefore, routing of the application for advanced degree must begin at least two weeks prior to the application deadline. An application fee for PhD degree students is required when the application is submitted. Upon completion of the degree audit, the Graduate College notifies students in writing when they have met all degree requirements.

C3. Grade Requirements for Satisfactory Progress.

Failure to satisfactorily progress in the program will be based on the University Graduate Policy as noted below (Table 4):

The Graduate College monitors the academic progress of all graduate students and notifies students in writing of all academic deficiencies. The cumulative GPA after each 9-hour increment determines academic standing.

Table 4. The University’s Academic Probation Policy is expressed in the following chart:

If student is on:	And earns a GPA of:	The status becomes:
Any status	3.0 or above	Clear
Clear	2.99-2.5	Warning
Clear	2.49-2.0	Probation
Probation	Below 3.0	Dismissal
Warning	Below 3.0	Probation
Any status	Below 2.0	Dismissal

C4. Reasons for Dismissal from the Program.

The Graduate College notifies students when they are dismissed from graduate programs without

completing a degree. Dismissals usually take place at the end of a term. Students may be dismissed for the following reasons:

- Upon the expiration of the 10-consecutive semester time limit for those students in a PhD program who were admitted with a master's degree. Upon the expiration of the 14 consecutive semester limit for PhD students who were admitted to the MS to PhD bypass option.
- Upon the failure to meet the grade point average requirements as stated in the policy on Academic Deficiency and Probation.
- Upon written notice to the Graduate College of voluntary withdrawal from the program.
- Upon failure to pass the comprehensive (preliminary) examination, dissertation proposal defense, or final dissertation defense.
- Upon failure to maintain an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher. Students must have a minimum overall cumulative grade point average of 3.0 to be eligible for the degree. Students are required to obtain a B- or above in all graded courses to progress in the program. All graduate numbered courses taken with graduate student classification at the University of Delaware are applied to the cumulative index. Credit hours and courses for which the grade is below "C-" do not count toward the degree even though the grade is applied to the index.
- Upon violation of University of Delaware regulations regarding academic honesty. All graduate students are subject to University of Delaware regulations regarding [academic honesty](#). Violations of these regulations or other forms of gross misconduct may result in immediate dismissal from the Program.

In the case of dismissal, the HBSP PhD Program Director is required to send a report to the Graduate College that states the HBS Graduate Programs Committee vote on the decision causing dismissal and the justification for this action. The Graduate College will notify a student in writing when the student is being dismissed for failure to make satisfactory progress in the program. Students who are dismissed from the Doctor in Health Behavior Science and Promotion program may apply for admittance to the Master's (MS) in Health Promotion program.

C5. Procedures for Student Appeals.

Students who receive what they perceive as an unfair evaluation by a faculty member or faculty committee may file a written grievance in accordance with the University of Delaware policies.

Specifically, If the issue remains unresolved after a meeting between the student and the HBS Graduate Programs Committee, the student may submit a written appeal to the Department Chair within 10 business days of the meeting. The Department Chair will issue a written decision on the appeal, and a description of the proposed resolution within 10 business days of appeal receipt.

In the case of academic dismissal, the student may appeal the termination by writing to the Graduate College. This appeal must be made within ten class days from the date on which the student has been notified of academic dismissal. If the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs grants reinstatement, the student must meet the conditions of the reinstatement. Failure to meet these conditions will result in dismissal from the program. A graduate student may be reinstated only once to a given major. The student's academic transcript will reflect the reinstatement with academic probation status.

All access to student records is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

IV: ASSESSMENT PLAN

A variety of internal and external mechanisms will be used to evaluate the curriculum and overall effectiveness of the HBSP PhD program.

Internally, the HBSP PhD Program Director and the HBS graduate programs committee will review student progress, grades, and pass/fail rate on coursework, preliminary examination results, enrollments, and curricular program of study on an annual basis. This information will be used to evaluate the extent to which students are developing critical competencies in HBS and to assess and adjust student flow through the HBSP PhD program.

Markers of students' success will be tracked, including:

1. Publications (chapters, peer-reviewed journal articles, books)
2. Presentations (invited and national conferences)
3. Awards and honors
4. Fellowships and grants to support research
5. Job placements (post-PhD and faculty positions, leadership positions in private and governmental public health organizations)

In addition, we will track how effectively the HBSP PhD Program advances students by tracking the following:

1. Program attrition (dropouts, dismissals)
2. Time to complete the PhD degree

Finally, we will use a variety of mechanisms for tracking students' perceptions of the program, including:

1. Anonymous student surveys to assess different aspects of the program including: classes, mentoring, funding, and research opportunities
2. Unsolicited student feedback

Externally, the HBSP PhD program will be subject to program review every seven years by two or more external reviewers in the field of health behavior science.

V: FINANCIAL AID

Funding for HBSP PhD students will come from a variety of sources including, but not limited to department graduate assistantships (*Department-funded*) and faculty advisor grant support (*Faculty-funded*).

Different types of assistantships (Department funded and Faculty funded) may be awarded to full-time students (registered in at least 6 graduate credits each semester) based on admission ranking, needs of the program, experience and expertise of the graduate student and funding availability. Students appointed to assistantships, who are on contract, are provided experiences that can only be gained by performing instructional or research activities that are compensated based on the University's Graduate College guidelines and policies. Students may pursue additional employment beyond their contract however it must be within the Graduate Contract Additional Employment Policy.

For Department-funded assistantships, it is expected that these students will teach lower-level classes. Continuation of this award is contingent upon the evaluation of the HBSP PhD Program Director, the HBS Graduate Programs Committee and the Department Chair. The student must remain in good academic standing to be eligible for the continuation of the award.

For faculty funded assistantships it is expected that during the first four semesters these students will serve as a teaching assistant for a class and conduct research activities for their faculty advisor. During the last three semesters, it is expected that students will serve as the instructor of record for one lower-level class per semester and conduct research activities with their faculty advisor. Continuation of Department-funded assistantships is contingent upon the evaluation of the HBSP PhD Program Director, the HBS Graduate Programs Committee and the Department Chair. The student must remain

in good academic standing to be eligible for the continuation of the award.

Faculty-funded assistantships will be dedicated to the execution of the grant-funded activities as directed by the faculty advisor. Continuation of this award is primarily contingent upon the evaluation of the faculty advisor (study Principal Investigator) and secondarily with the HBSP PhD Program Director and the HBS Graduate Programs Committee. The student must remain in good academic standing and meet the demands of the grant proposal and research activities directed by the faculty advisor to be eligible for the continuation of the award.

Students can also apply for internal funding through the University of Delaware and the Graduate College. Students can also apply for pre-PhD support from funding agencies such as the American Heart Association and National Institutes of Health. All students will be encouraged to apply for these external awards. The faculty advisor will mentor the student on the writing of the proposal.

VI: PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

A. Program Faculty.

The following BHAN faculty specialize in Health Behavior Science and Promotion and have research and teaching expertise that will be central to the implementation and administration of the proposed program. Responsibilities of program faculty include oversight of program policies and curriculum.

Table 5: Summary of BHAN Faculty with HBS Research Expertise

Faculty Member	Research Expertise
Adam Davey, PhD	Bioinformatics, latent variable modeling, healthy aging, health disparities
Gregory Dominick, PhD	Health literacy, program evaluation, use of wearable technology to promote physical activity and other behaviors to improve cardiovascular health
Laura Lessard, PhD, MPH	Program and policy evaluation, the wellbeing of the childcare workforce and childcare settings
Iva Obrusnikova, PhD	Inclusion, active community living, and cardiometabolic risk factors of individuals with disabilities
Elizabeth Orsega-Smith, PhD	Psychosocial determinants of physical activity, aging and health, Community based participatory research with eating and physical activity behaviors
Freda Patterson, PhD, MS	Sleep and circadian health, sedentary behavior, cardiovascular health, multiple health behavior change and population health
P. Michael Peterson, EdD	Social marketing and health communication, workplace stress, behavior change strategies
Laurie Ruggiero, PhD	Developing/tailoring community and technology-based interventions to promote healthier lifestyles, especially with underserved populations; diabetes self-management/diabetes prevention; behavior change theory
Richard Suminski, PhD, MPH	Community-engaged research, built-environment/physical activity promotion, community-level physical activity infrastructure, physical activity measurement

Additionally, the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition faculty include those with expertise in nutrition science; these faculty frequently collaborate with HBS faculty, serve on Dissertation committees and teach graduate elective courses that PhD HBS students may take as an elective course. Faculty from other university departments wishing to affiliate with the program are invited to pursue joint appointments in the Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition, in accordance with BHAN department policy.

B. HBSP PhD Program Director.

The HBSP PhD Program Director will be a tenured faculty member affiliated with the program who holds the rank of associate or full professor. The term of service for the HBSP PhD Program Director is three years, with a limit of two consecutive terms. The HBSP PhD Program Director is the central program representative and point person.

The responsibilities of the HBSP PhD Program Director include:

- 1) Providing leadership and oversight for the program
- 2) Organizing and leading meetings of affiliated faculty and the HBS PhD Program Committee; reviewing annual doctoral student progress reports
- 3) Communicating as necessary with the Graduate College
- 4) Serving as the first point of contact for issues arising with program students and faculty
- 5) Approving all changes to programs of study
- 6) Approving all changes in faculty advisors
- 7) Corresponding with prospective students and overseeing program recruitment and admission decisions
- 8) Program evaluation and assessment

C. HBS Graduate Programs Committee.

The HBS Graduate Programs Committee will be responsible for the administrative duties needed to run the HBSP PhD program in the Department of BHAN. The program committee will consist of affiliated faculty members, and shall be co-chaired by the HBSP PhD and MS in Health Promotion Program Directors. The members of the HBS graduate program committee shall be elected by HBS program faculty for staggered, two-year terms. Responsibilities of the HBS graduate programs committee shall include (but not limited to):

- Admission of students into the program,
- Approval of student programs of study,
- Approval of student selection of a new faculty advisor after admission to the program,
- Writing and grading written comprehensive (preliminary) examination questions,
- Oversight of student progress in the program, including dismissal of students who fail to make satisfactory progress,
- Approval of dissertation committees, and
- Other tasks required for the continued success of the program.

D. Program Resources.

D.1. Travel for Professional Meetings or Presentations.

HBSP PhD students may apply to the HBS Graduate Programs Committee (who will make a recommendation to the Department Chair) for full or partial support to cover conference registration, travel and accommodation costs.

Appendix A: List of Sample Elective Courses

General Electives	
COMM656	Communication in Organizations
PHYT809	Psychosocial Aspects of Health and Disease
EPID627	Social Epidemiology
HLPR819	Social Marketing
NTDT610	Overweight and Obesity Prevention and Management
NURS812	Responsible Conduct of Research
EPID964	Grant Writing in Epidemiology
Statistical/Data Analysis/Research Design Electives	
BHAN609	Survey Research Methods
BISC643	Biological Data Analysis
EDUC812	Regression and Structural Equation Modeling
EDUC856	Introduction to Statistical Inference
EPID605	Epidemiology Methods I
EPID610	Epidemiology Methods II
MMSC635	Practical Genomics, Proteomics and Bioinformatics
PSYC809	Research Design
PSYC860	Psychological Statistics
PSYC878	Hierarchical Linear Modeling
STAT608	Statistical Research Methods
STAT613	Applied Multivariate Statistics
STAT615	Design and Analysis of Experiments
STAT656	Biostatistics
STAT818	Multivariate Analysis

Appendix B: Minimum PhD Course Requirements

PhD in Health Behavior Science and Promotion (Minimum Credits)

	# Credits	Semester Typically Offered	Planned	Completed
CORE COURSES [21 CREDITS]				
HLPR803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming	3 credits	Fall		
BHAN855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Health Sciences	3 credits	Fall		
HLPR630 Behavior Change Strategies and Tactics	3 credits	Fall		
HLPR804 Advanced Health Promotion Program Evaluation	3 credits	Spring		
HLPR813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine	3 credits	Spring		
BHAN820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health	3 credits	Spring		
BHAN856 Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health	3 credits	Spring		
STATISTICS AND RESEARCH METHODS COURSES [9 CREDITS]				
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective 1	3 credits			
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective 2	3 credits			
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective 3	3 credits			
ELECTIVES [3 CREDITS]				
General Elective: _____	3 credits			
APPLIED RESEARCH EXPERIENCE [15 CREDITS]				
BHAN Seminar	0 credits	Fall		
Preliminary Examinations (Winter semester, year 2)	0 credits			
HLPR868 Independent Research	1 credit			
HLPR868 Independent Research	1 credit			
HLPR868 Independent Research	1 credit			
HLPR868 Independent Research	3 credits			
Dissertation Proposal Defense (by 8/1 year 2)	0 credits			
HLPR969 Dissertation Research	9 credits			
TOTAL CREDITS	48 Credits			

**MS to PhD Bypass Students after completing one year in the MS in HP
(Minimum Credits)**

	# Credits	Semester Typically Offered	Planned	Completed
MS IN HEALTH PROMOTION COURSES				
BHAN 609 Research Design	3 credits			
HLPR 809 Health Behavior Theory	3 credits			
HLPR 819 Social Marketing or HLPR 610 Health and Media	3 credits			
HLPR 632 Health Science Data Analysis or HLPR 605 Chronic Disease Management	3 credits			
Elective	3 credits			
PHD CORE COURSES [21 CREDITS]				
HLPR803 Advanced Health Promotion Programming	3 credits	Fall		
BHAN855 Qualitative and Mixed Methods in Health Sciences	3 credits	Fall		
HLPR630 Behavior Change Strategies and Tactics	3 credits	Fall		
HLPR804 Advanced Health Promotion Program Evaluation	3 credits	Spring		
HLPR813 Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine	3 credits	Spring		
BHAN820 Social and Environmental Determinants of Health	3 credits	Spring		
BHAN856 Multivariable Biostatistics for Population Health	3 credits	Spring		
STATISTICS AND RESEARCH METHODS COURSES [9 CREDITS]				
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective 1	3 credits			
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective 2	3 credits			
Statistics or Data Analysis/Research Methods Elective 3	3 credits			
ELECTIVES [3 CREDITS]				
Elective _____	3 credits	Fall		
APPLIED RESEARCH EXPERIENCE [15 CREDITS]				
BHAN Seminar	0 credits	Fall		
Preliminary Examinations (Winter semester, year 2)	0 credits			
HLPR868 Independent Research	1 credit			
HLPR868 Independent Research	1 credit			
HLPR868 Independent Research	1 credit			
HLPR868 Independent Research	3 credits			
Dissertation Proposal Defense (by 8/1 year 2)	0 credits			
HLPR969 Dissertation Research	9 credits			
<u>TOTAL CREDITS</u>	63 Credits			